

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
15 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

State Dept & DIA review(s) completed for
entire document

MIDDLE EAST

MORI C03326465

Situation Report Number 39
(as of 1130 EDT)

THE MILITARY SITUATION

GENERAL

1. Ground activity resumed on both fronts this morning, although fighting on the Egyptian front was significantly lighter than yesterday. On the Syrian front, both sides continued to engage in artillery and tank duels, with Israeli forces intensely shelling areas southeast of Sasa. Syrian forces appear to be fighting doggedly, and Israeli forces appear to be almost at a standstill on this front.

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SYRIAN FRONT

6. The Lebanese press claims that a heliborne force of Syrian commandos have occupied a hill near Al Qunaytirah as a prelude to an attack on the town. This report, however, has not been confirmed by any other source. Other reports suggest that lightly armed forces ranged along the Israeli left flank on the slopes of Mount Hermon may be Palestine Liberation Army commandos or fedayeen guerrillas.

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BATTLE LOSSES (estimated)
(Estimated Losses as of 1130, 15 October)

	<u>Israel</u>	<u>Arab</u>
Personnel	2,900-3,100	13,500-16,600
Tanks	750-850	1,150-1,240
Aircraft	95-110	250-270
Ships	4 (poss)	20-26

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EGYPT

14. President Sadat will address the nation tomorrow at noon Cairo time (0600 EDT) at the opening of an extraordinary joint session of the People's Assembly and the Arab Socialist Union central committee. The speech will be Sadat's first public statement since hostilities began.

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KUWAIT

16. The meeting of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) scheduled to be convened in Kuwait tomorrow has again been postponed until 17 October.

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18. Meanwhile, Saudi officials are becoming concerned that Soviet influence in the Middle East will rise in the period following the conclusion of the war and that US action to "implement or impose" a peace based on Resolution 242 will be necessary to forestall this. During a meeting on 14 October with the US Charge at Riyadh, according to a sensitive State Department cable, Saudi Royal Counsellor Rashad Pharaon expressed considerable apprehension that a continuation of the conflict will inevitably lead to a resurgence of Soviet influence, which has been on the wane, he said, thanks in large measure to the Saudis' own efforts. In this situation, moderates such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan would be in an awkward and exposed position. To ease the Saudi dilemma, Pharaon--seconded by a leading member of the royal family--urged that the US work quickly in conjunction with the Soviets to achieve a settlement along the lines of Resolution 242.

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ANNEX II

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(As of 1130 EDT)

Redeployment of Israeli Forces From Syria
to the Sinai (estimated)

1. The current disposition of Israeli forces is not known precisely. Based on peacetime locations and force requirements of the past week, it is estimated that both the Northern (Golan Heights) and Southern (Sinai) commands are intact and that some forces from the Central command (Jordan) were sent to the Sinai front. Before the transfer of forces from the Syrian front, then, the Israelis probably had eight infantry brigades and two armored divisions facing Syria. Three infantry brigades probably are being held opposite Jordan, and four armored divisions and three infantry brigades are in the Sinai.

2. The Israeli advance apparently has halted on the outskirts of Sasa some 21 miles from Damascus. There is another Israeli thrust south of Sasa but the front there generally approximates the 1967 ceasefire line.

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4. The situation in the Sinai apparently has required the Israelis to reinforce their forces there at the expense of their objective--the destruction of the Syrian army--in Syria. The Syrians have not yet been defeated. Some units are conducting an orderly withdrawal toward prepared defensive positions near Damascus, but others continue to attack the Israelis. With the exception of the front along the Damascus road, the general battleline still approximates the 1967 ceasefire line.

5. The Israelis probably will not advance much further toward Damascus. Rather, they probably will try to destroy Syrian forces along the ceasefire line and consolidate their positions there and along the Damascus road. This could take as long as a week with the forces now committed.

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7. The continued presence of a viable enemy force opposite the Golan Heights will limit the extent to which the Israelis could prudently draw down their own forces there. They probably would consider that one armored division and two to three infantry brigades could be transferred to the Sinai front, leaving five to six infantry brigades to defend their positions in Syria and the Golan Heights with the remaining armored divisions held as a mobile reserve to counter any serious Syrian counterattack. If units were withdrawn from the Syrian front before 13 October they

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could already have completed the move to the Sinai--a journey of some 250 miles to a reserve position.

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8. The reinforcement depicted above would initially free one of the other armored divisions, currently being held as a reserve in the Sinai, for a counter-attack on the Egyptians. The infantry brigades probably would be committed as soon as they were rested and refitted. They probably would relieve all or part of the three infantry brigades which have been in contact with the Egyptians since the war began. In this case, there would be no significant quantitative addition to the Israeli force.

9. The addition of the armored division to the four already in the Sinai would not significantly increase overall Israeli force levels there. If, however, the Israelis now have two armored divisions on line and two in a mobile reserve status, the major armored units directly in contact with the Egyptians could be increased by 50 percent with the reserve held constant.

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